



The Florida House of Representatives

Chris Sprowls
Speaker

NEWS RELEASE

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Media Contact:

media@myfloridahouse.gov

(850) 717-5780

Florida House of Representatives Passes Bill to Protect Intellectual Diversity on College Campuses

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (*March 18, 2021*) — Rounding out Week 3 of Regular Session, Florida House Speaker Chris Sprowls, R-Palm Harbor, highlighted significant legislation to protect intellectual diversity on college campuses that passed off the House floor 77-42.

“Florida’s colleges and universities should be places where the free exchange of ideas is celebrated and encouraged,” said Speaker Sprowls. “However, today’s environment of censorship has revealed fear in people who are scared to push back against the angry mob and speak their minds. This has to stop, especially on our taxpayer-funded campuses where intellectual diversity should thrive. This bill protects freedom of speech and offers a safe haven for those with opposing points of view.”

HB 233, sponsored by Representative Spencer Roach, R-North Fort Myers, encourages diversity in thought and speech in Florida’s educational institutions. The bill calls collecting data through an objective, nonpartisan and statistically valid survey to measure the status of intellectual freedom and viewpoint diversity on Florida’s state university campuses. The bill also prohibits the Board of Governors, State Board of Education and educational institutions from shielding students, faculty and staff from constitutionally protected free speech.

“HB 233 ensures that no viewpoints will be canceled and that speech will not be infringed on at Florida’s colleges and universities,” said Representative Roach. “With this bill, we will be able to see data that will help us evaluate whether our universities truly are a place where everyone can participate in the marketplace of ideas.”

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